

Testimony IN SUPPORT of:
H.B. No. 5004 - AN ACT IMPLEMENTING EARLY VOTING;
Raised S.B. No. 1057 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE SECRETARY OF THE
STATE AND EARLY VOTING;
Raised S.B. No. 1064 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
EARLY VOTING;
S.J. No. 29 - RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE
CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW NO-EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING;
Wednesday, February 22nd, 2023

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Dear Co-Chairs Senator Mae Flexer and Representative Matt Blumenthal, Vice-Chairs Sen. Slap and Rep. Morin-Bello, Ranking Members Senator Rob Sampson and Rep. Gale Mastrofrancesco, and Distinguished Members of the Government and Administration & Elections Committee:

My name is Wanda Bubriski and I am a voter from Branford. Thank you for all you have done to protect and expand the freedom to vote in Connecticut. Your collective leadership paved the way for Connecticut voters to change the course of history in our state on Election Day, November 8th, 2022. We wish to extend congratulations to each of you—since as you know voters decided by a very strong 60% majority that Connecticut is now the 47th state to allow Early Voting.

As you undertake the work of finalizing proposed legislation to implement Early Voting—and as you prepare to vote on whether to adopt the proposed resolution to amend the state constitution to allow for No-Excuse Absentee Voting, as well as on improving the absentee ballot counting process—I urge that you:

- **Pass legislation that designs and fully funds** Connecticut's first-ever Early in-person Voting system by March, 2023 to give town elections officials time to incorporate any budgetary changes in advance of the 2023 municipal election cycle. Connecticut voters deserve a baseline of at least two weeks of Early Voting that includes weekend and evening hours—with the funded option for higher population towns to provide multiple locations in addition to the office of the registrar.
- **Adopt the proposed resolution for Connecticut to join 35 other states that allow No-Excuse Absentee Voting**—for a required second time by simple majority in both chambers during this 2023 legislative session. This cannot wait until a 2024 short session when legislative time constraints will be severe. Voters need to know right away if No-Excuse Absentee Voting will be on the statewide ballot in 2024.
- Pass legislation that allows: (1) the municipal clerk to deliver absentee ballots to the ballot counters before or at six o'clock p.m. on the day of an election; (2) **notification of voters whose absentee ballots may be**

rejected due to a defect so that voters can either correct the defect or vote in person; (3) prepaid postage for the return of absentee ballots; (4) absentee ballot applications that have been completed and signed to be public records subject to public inspection.

Personally, Voting is THE FOUNDATION of Democracy. And here we are in 2023, and still dicker and dithering about access to voting. The act of voting in Connecticut should not be limited to one work day—because that puts enormous burden on voters working multiple jobs, wacky shifts, care-taking of children, elderly, or any other group that cannot be left alone. People also get sick, or have to make emergency trips out of town, out of state, out of country.

We learned during the pandemic that people will gladly, and safely and honestly, vote early without having to state a reason other than they want their vote counted. I am the sole caregiver of a 95-year-old invalid. If election day is cold and rainy, there is no way she will go to the polls. She did not vote in the last municipal election because: it was cold and rainy.

Let's make voting EASY and ACCESSIBLE for ALL Connecticut voters.

Please pass NO Excuse Absentee Voting.

Please pass same day registration during the Early Voting period.

Please earmark the funds for implementing Early Voting, and educating the public about Early Voting.

It's that simple for something so foundational to upholding our Democracy.

Thank you,

Wanda Bubriski
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Branford, CT